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Glimpses of Social Progress in Indiana During One Hundred Years

By Alexander Johnson

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A State Aged 100

Glimpses of Social Progress in Indiana During One Hundred Years

By Alexander Johnson¹

INDIANA was the last, or almost the last, of the frontier states. In those to the westward, the railroads came first and the settlers followed along the iron rails. They had mail and newspaper service in their new homes on the prairie, almost as efficient as they had enjoyed in the states they had left. In Indiana, the pioneers, like the early settlers of the continent, went on horseback or on foot into the wilderness. They hewed their farms out of the virgin forest. Mails were slow and infrequent, newspapers were rare. The settlements were small and widely scattered. Each family had to be self-provident and self-dependent. Only the strong and stout-hearted could survive the hardships of those pioneering days.

The sturdy individualism that made it possible for the pioneers to conquer the wilderness, persisted to some extent in their children after the first generation had passed away. It is no wonder that the social spirit, which is now so well marked in the state, was perhaps a little slow in showing itself among the self-reliant descendants of the pioneers. It is little wonder that practical and even material aspects of life prevailed over those theoretical or esthetic.

¹Alexander Johnson was the first secretary of the Indiana Board of State Charities, serving from April 1, 1889 to June 30, 1893. In the preparation of this paper he has been assisted by Laura Greely who has been for many years chief clerk and statistician of the board. He wishes most gratefully to acknowledge Miss Greely's invaluable help, without which, in fact, the article could not have been prepared.

To write in briefest outline the history of social progress in Indiana during the first century of the life of the state, would be an attempt too ambitious for the author of this paper. All he can hope to do is to indicate some of the salient points of the story and sketch the progress of the benevolent and correctional work of the commonwealth, more particularly its development since April 1, 1889, when the Board of State Charities was created.

The first constitution, adopted in 1816, was a noble, human document, and in many respects in advance of similar foundations of law in other states. This was notably shown in its declaration as to the punishment of crime. The eighteenth section of the bill of rights reads: "The penal code shall be founded on the principles of reformation and not of vindictive justice." This was a beacon mark of progress, set by a high tide which receded, as such tides in the affairs of men usually do.

A few far-seeing men there were in the country, like the noted Edward Livingston in Louisiana, who visualized great principles like this, but they were so much the exception to the general rule, that in Indiana it took 81 years before that noble declaration of the constitution was made actual in statute law as applied to serious offenders, and 97 years before it was applied to misdemeanants.

Prison Reform

ONE of the abiding results of this first declaration was that wise theories of

correction have been recognized and given voice by Indiana statesmen, and, however slowly adopted, prison reform has been a frequent matter of consideration and comment, especially by the long line of wise and high-minded men from whom the governors of the state have usually been chosen. In Governor James B. Ray's message to the General Assembly, 14 years after the birth of the state, occurs a fine argument against the death penalty. It is based on the principle that the object of punishment is not merely to prevent the offender from committing other offences, nor only to deter others from crime, but includes reformation of the criminal.

After recounting the many possibilities of error and miscarriage of justice, the impossibility of certainty in human affairs, he concludes:

"Effects are sometimes ascribed to causes which never produced them. Misapprehension and mistake follow. The scene closes with one of the primitive but barbarous customs of the early and rude stages of society, when even witchcraft was believed in by legislators and judges as learned as Matthew Hale, and life taken to appease the superstition of the law and the judge."

Fifteen years later, in 1845, Governor James Whitcomb in his message to the legislature, thus outlined the system which has only just been adopted in Indiana by the establishment of a state penal farm.

"The policy of confinement in county jails as a punishment for crime may in most cases well be questioned. It is not only a serious burden on the counties, but it is believed to be incompatible with reformation, which is the leading purpose of criminal punishment. The application of the principle of penitentiary discipline upon those guilty of minor offences . . . by means of houses of correction is respectfully recommended. They should be established with an eye to the comfort and . . . employment of the inmates, and to the exercise of a kindly but firm and steady discipline."

Similar expressions of enlightened thought upon public questions might be quoted, and when the constitution was revised in 1851 many of them were adopted in the amendments.

Although the territorial legislature of 1792 had authorized the erection of jails, yet previous to the admission of the state the legal methods of correction were chiefly pillories, stocks,² the whipping post and the gallows. Some of the earliest jails were in the cellars of court houses, and a few of these remained in use until recent days. No doubt most of the first jails were little more than rude log cabins. A famous two-story log jail still exists in Brown county, although it is little used as it is not supposed to be strong enough to confine modern criminals.

The first Indiana state prison was established by a law of 1821, at Jeffersonville, and was opened November 1, 1822. This is on the southern border of the state and when built it was fairly central as to population. By 1859, it was evident that the great growth of the state was to be in the central and northern parts, and an additional institution, called the State Prison North, was built at Michigan City on the lake.

In 1897, the sentiment in favor of reformatory treatment of those convicts who were supposed to be corrigible led to the closing of the southern prison, as Reformatory, for male offenders, under such, and its conversion into the Indiana thirty convicted for the first time; with the methods of the indeterminate sentence and parole as the chief features of its system.

The organic law of this institution was said by students of penology to be the best in the world, and the reformatory has earned an enviable reputation. By a separate act of the same year, the indeterminate sentence was applied to convicts in the northern institution although it remained a prison.

About the year 1905 the method of sterilization, to prevent what was supposed to be hereditary criminality as well as feeble-mindedness, was introduced and practiced for some time without any authority of law, but with the consent of those who submitted to it. Then a law was enacted making it legal as applied to incurable idiots and incorrigible crim-

²Although authorized by law it seems doubtful that pillories or stocks were built.

inals in institutions. This law was not heeded, since those operated on were supposedly corrigible inmates of a reformatory. No other institution operated under the law, although it applied, quite positively, to many of their inmates.

In 1909 at the request of a governor, who declared the method unethical and the law unconstitutional, the practice was discontinued. The law has not been repealed, or passed upon by the Supreme Court.

The principle of reformatory treatment was applied to young male delinquents in 1867, when the House of Refuge for Juvenile Offenders was established. The name of this institution was changed in 1883 to Indiana Reform School for Boys, and 20 years later to Indiana Boys' School. Each change of name indicated an advance, in purpose at least, and methods at first crude and unsatisfactory were changed with the changing name.

In 1869, the growing belief in the reformatory principle and the disclosure of some grave abuses in the management of the state prison, caused the establishment of a correctional institution for women and girls. This was in spite of an assumption, rather felt than expressed, that the number of female criminals was so small, and the depravity of the few so positive, that measures of reformation were either useless or unnecessary as applied to them. The institution was named the Indiana reformatory Institution for Women and Girls and was opened October 4, 1873. It was a combination of a prison for women and a reform school for girls; the two under one management, in separate wings of the same building; the inmates never mingling, and seeing each other only at religious services in the common chapel. As was usual in those days the reform school received children merely dependent and neglected as well as those technically delinquent.

With increasing public attention to the state's social economy, increasing faith in the efficacy of reformatory discipline, and chiefly, an increasing sense of justice to the unfortunate even if delinquent, this incongruous assembling together of adult criminals, juvenile offenders, and innocent victims of misfortune

or of others' crimes, was felt to be a grave mistake, and various attempts were made to correct it.

First Board of Women

IN 1877, the management of the institution for women and girls was "taken from the oversight of an unsympathizing board of men and committed to a board of women."³ It is believed that this was the first institution of the kind ever placed in the care of a board composed exclusively of women. In 1889 the name of the institution was changed by the progressive legislature of that year, to Reform School for Girls and Women's Prison, and an effort was made to dissociate the two parts as much as possible. It was felt to be an injustice to the girls whose reformation was hoped for to have it understood, as was inevitable under the circumstances, that they had been prison convicts.

At last, by an act of 1903, which, however, was not carried into effect until four years later, the two institutions were separated in fact, the department for girls was removed to a country location and named the Indiana Girls' School; and the quarters formerly occupied by the girls were made into a correctional department for short term women convicts, who had formerly been held in county jails.

In 1899, the Indeterminate Sentence and Parole Systems, which up to that date were usually the distinctive features of a reformatory as opposed to a prison (although in Indiana they applied to both), were extended so as to apply to the prison for women. After another period of 14 years, in 1913, the Indiana State Farm was established for short-term male convicts, previously kept in county jails. In everything but the indeterminate sentence,⁴ this made the reformatory principle apply to misdemeanants, as had been urged by Governor Whitcomb in 1845; so that at last the

³Extract from a report of the Committee on Prisons, etc., of the Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.

⁴The Board of State Charities has urged the application of the indeterminate sentence to the convicts at the Penal Farm.

noble declaration of the constitution was almost completely embodied in statute law.

In 1903, a law created juvenile courts. The first step in this direction was taken by Judge George W. Stubbs of the Indianapolis Municipal Court in 1901. He was "astounded at the number of children brought before him," and without any idea of establishing a special court, separated the hearings of the children's cases from those of adults. The law of 1903 applied to every county, and provided for paid probation officers. Still there was some popular misapprehension. The Juvenile Court was still misunderstood as more or less of a criminal court, not merely a court for children who by law are beneath the age of responsibility and so cannot be criminal. In 1907 a new law made the Juvenile Court the sole agency for any legal dealing with children; such as making them public wards as dependents.

Early legislation about jails conferred full authority as to their management on the circuit judges. But the control that seemed provided for was not fully, if at all, exercised and there were many complaints of disorder, insanitation and bad discipline. The Board of State Charities had inspected the jails from the beginning of its work and under its urgency many improvements had been made.

In 1909, a law was enacted requiring the board to make regulations for the conduct of jails and if these were not complied with to report the fact to the Circuit Court. If the court failed to act, the board is to notify the governor, who may condemn any jail and have the prisoners taken to the jail of another county. Under the dread of this law some officials have acted, who without it were inclined to resist the suggestions of the board.

The Indeterminate Sentence

ONE more reform in correctional matters remained to be made. The theory of the indeterminate sentence is that as soon as a prisoner may safely go at large, his release shall be granted. There are some persons convicted who do not need even a brief term of incarceration. To save such persons from the disgrace

of the prison, the law of the suspended sentence, or probation, was applied; at first to juveniles in 1867; and in 1907 to adults, except those guilty of murder, rape, arson, burglary, kidnapping or treason.

These various changes for the better were not gained without earnest struggle. The established order was defended against the reformers by many officials and politicians, and by some conservative citizens who were neither. It must not be supposed that those who resisted innovations were all, or always, governed by corrupt motives. Prison reform always has earnest opponents. Some of these are actuated by selfish motives. But there is an underlying doubt in the possibility of the reformation of a criminal; a belief, often sincere enough, that once a thief means always a thief; that a criminal woman is beyond hope of redemption; that criminals deserve no sympathy, but are forever beyond the pale of decent citizenship.

These doubts and beliefs are cherished by those who have pecuniary interests in evil prison methods, as a justification for their selfishness. But they are often held with tenacity, by men who in other concerns of life are not unworthy citizens, and are the strongest obstacles in the way of those who strive for prison reform. And again it is only fair to remember that some reformers are impractical, unreasonable and even cranky; that some of the sympathy extended to offenders, deserves the name, so often given to it, of sickly sentimentality; that gifts of flowers and delicacies to convicted murderers, whose deeds have been sufficiently exploited in the newspapers to make them notorious, are causes of just derision by jailers and prison warders.

In the long drawn-out struggle in Indiana for justice, even to the unjust the part taken by the Society of Friends deserves mention. The society was specially strong in the southeastern portion of the state, into which there had been a considerable influx of Friends from North and South Carolina, Virginia and other southern states. This movement was largely due to the pro-slavery agitation of the later years of the eighteenth and the earlier years of the nineteenth

century. During this period, the Quakers as a body, opposed slavery and suffered for their opinions. They had to struggle for both religious and political rights.

In North Carolina many Negroes whose Quaker owners had emancipated them, were re-enslaved, by ex-post facto legislation, because certain formalities which did not exist when the enfranchisement took place, had not been complied with. The Quakers realized that they could not prosper with free labor in competition with slave labor and they migrated in large numbers to Ohio first and then to Indiana.

Slavery had been abolished in the Northwest territory, of which Indiana was a part, by the ordinance of 1787, "But there was still much pro-slavery sentiment and the final status of the state on the question was not determined until after a long and vigorous contest, in every stage of which the Friends were a factor, after they had entered the territory. They were a determining factor in the campaign of 1810 when the anti-slavery forces triumphed in the election of a representative to Congress; and expressed themselves by petitions and through one of their members who was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention"⁵ which made Indiana a free state for all time.

"Their most immediate labors in behalf of slaves were, however, exerted in the activities of the underground railroad, one Friend having assisted 3,000 Negroes northward, and another expressing regret that he had only had the opportunity of assisting 2,700 when the emancipation proclamation was issued.

The Activity of the Quakers

It was natural that the religious body, which had given to the world John Howard and Elizabeth Fry, should be interested in prison reform. In 1867, the Representative Body of the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends appointed a committee "to organize a system for the reformation of juvenile offenders and the improvement of prison discipline." One

of the first members of that committee is still with us, the loved and respected Timothy Nicholson who has served as chairman of the Friends' Committee for many years. His annual reports made to the Representative Body, now called the Permanent Board, form a comprehensive history of prison and other reform in Indiana, during nearly 50 years of wise, patient and patriotic effort.

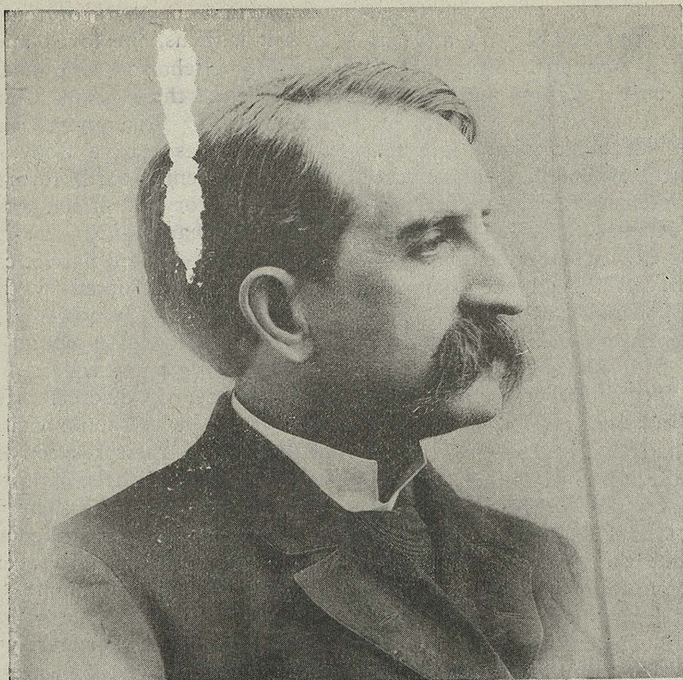
The method adopted by the Friends' Committee was, by visits and personal observation, to learn actual conditions. Each meeting was requested to appoint a committee of "discreet friends," men and women, who should visit the public institutions in their respective neighborhoods and report the facts to their meeting. Then the members, by petition, by influence on the state and county officials and the legislature, and especially by informing the general public, endeavored to secure redress of the evils that were found; in all cases not merely criticizing, but presenting a plan of betterment.

Among the results obtained by these wise and practical means, results which were largely, and in some cases almost wholly, due to the work of the Friends, may be mentioned the establishment of the Boys' Reformatory; the Women's Prison and Girls' Reformatory; the correction of many abuses in the prisons, insane hospitals and poor asylums; the establishment of county orphans' homes, by which children were taken out of the poor asylum; the creation of the Board of State Charities; and many minor reforms. The influence of the Friends in these matters was in much larger proportion than their number. This fact is a testimony to the general respect which they gained for uprightness and unselfish public spirit.⁶

When the law creating the Board of State Charities was enacted, Timothy Nicholson was one of the first members appointed. He became chairman of the sub-committee on prisons, etc., and for

⁵An interesting and unconscious testimony to the Quaker character, is found in the colloquialism, "Quaker measure," which still may be heard in the counties where many Quakers lived. It means that the Quaker's bushel or peck is heaped high and running over.

⁶The Quakers in the Old Northwest, by Harlow Lindley.



OSCAR C. MCCULLOCH

One of the men who has been largely responsible for putting Indiana to the front in matters of state charitable policy.

19 years thereafter, until his retirement in 1908, full of years and honors, he was an active and influential member of that board. It is a moderate estimate of Mr. Nicholson's work and influence to say that for 50 years he has been, in all matters of charity and correction, the wisest, strongest and most useful citizen of the state. To those who have worked with him, especially those employed in an official capacity by the board, he has been a wise, gentle, considerate and un-failing friend and advisor. It was said by a prominent state official, to whom Mr. Nicholson had given a faithful but gentle rebuke, "I would rather be called down by Timothy Nicholson than praised by most men."

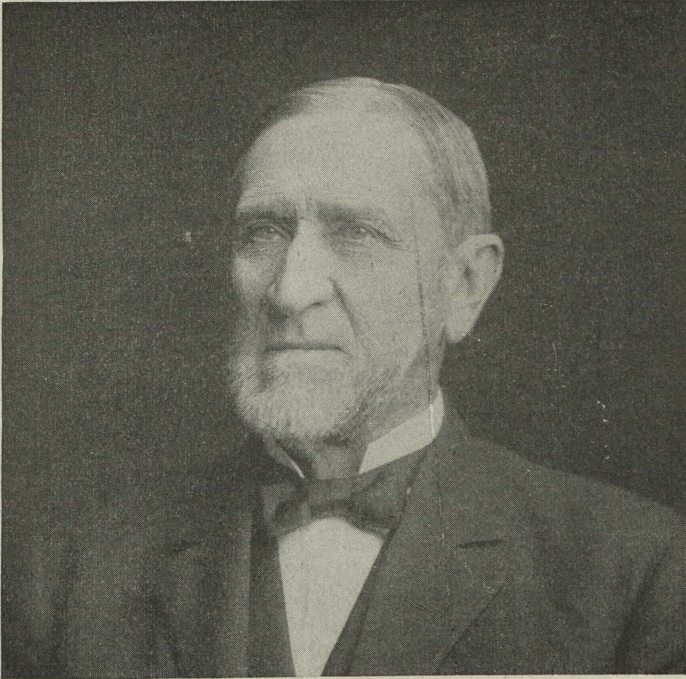
The Care of Paupers

DURING territorial days, and the first few years of statehood, public charities were confined to outdoor relief, which was given to a very small extent, and the farming-out of paupers. The story

is told of a settler who "bought a pauper" for a year, at the annual sheriff's sale. He took him home and set him at work hoeing corn. The neighbors gathered to see the "pauper" and exclaimed in surprise: "Is that a pauper? Why it's a man"!

The constitution of 1816 authorized county poor asylums. The first statute on the subject, in 1821, applied only to Knox county. It was repealed seven years later and the farming-out system resumed. A general poor asylum law was enacted in 1831, which permitted building by single counties or by county groups. Under this law, Franklin, Fayette and Union counties erected a joint poor asylum which was occupied in the spring of 1835.

Before many years each county had its poor farm, as they were generally called. At first most of these were run on the contract system by which the superintendent paid the county a rent for the farm and was paid a per-diem



TIMOTHY NICHOLSON

Said a public official years ago: "I would rather be called down by Timothy Nicholson than praised by most men."

for the support of the inmates.⁷ This dangerous and often pernicious system slowly died out. By 1889, there were only 10 of the 92 counties practicing it,⁸ and for many years the sensible, humane and business-like method of conducting the institution at the expense of the county, paying the superintendent a reasonable salary, and forbidding him any other pecuniary interest in the farm, has prevailed. Under this plan certain counties with productive farms, have managed so well that the pauper expense has been greatly reduced, in some even to the extent that the produce of the farm has paid the entire cost of the asylum, except interest on the investment.⁹ Similar results have been obtained during certain periods in one or two other counties.

⁷This pernicious method still prevails in some states which consider themselves to be humane and progressive.

⁸The last contract on the per-diem plan expired in September, 1903.

In these and many other cases, the old reproach that the poor farm is the poorest farm in the county is no longer deserved. It is noteworthy that the institutions with the best business management are usually those in which the standards of comfort and care are the highest.

At the legislative session of 1899, three useful laws, bearing on the county poor administration, were enacted. One of these provided for boards of county charities, whose functions are analogous to those of the Board of State Charities and which work in co-operation with that board.

⁹Some years ago in Crawford county, the farm not only supported the asylum but paid all the other poor expenses of the county, including the outdoor relief and the salaries of the township physicians. Such a condition could only prevail in a very poor county, where as is usual, though it seems anomalous, there are always the fewest paupers.

The second provided for an improved system of administration of county poor asylums.

The third regulated the administration of outdoor relief by the overseers of the poor. This law introduced into the township poor system the cardinal principles of what is called charity organization, and is probably the most complete and comprehensive law of that nature on the statute books of any state. At the National Conference of Charities and Correction held in Philadelphia in 1906, Governor Hanly stated that the results of this law and various other reforms which led up to it had effected an average reduction of more than \$300,000 annually since 1895, without causing any increased suffering to the poor and actually lessening the amount of pauperism in the state. This excellent outcome he credited wholly to the Board of State Charities.

As was the rule in most of the states, the early poor asylums sheltered a very heterogeneous mass of people, old and young; senile and diseased; epileptics, insane and feeble-minded; veterans of labor disabled by overwork, exposure and rheumatism; and veterans of vice disabled by dissipation and disease. Many of the asylums had a detached cabin, often called the jail and strongly barred. These were probably used at first for prisoners, and when the regular jails were built served to confine the more dangerous of the insane.

Effort for Dependent Children

THE modern student of philanthropy, if confronted with an asylum with such a mingling of inmates as above described, and told to select one class to be segregated from the group and set off by itself, would surely choose the dependent normal children. It seems strange to us now that these were among the latest to be rescued from the mass. It was not until 1897, that a law was enacted forbidding children being kept in a poorhouse.

Early in the century¹⁰ the Catholic dioceses had erected and supported orphan asylums for Catholic children.¹¹ The first private orphanage under lay control was the Indianapolis Widows' and Orphans' Asylum, incorporated in 1851. A few others followed. In 1875, counties were empowered to subsidize private orphanages, and in 1881 to establish county orphans' homes. But the movement to take all children out of the poorhouse gained slowly. In 1877 there was one small orphans' home in Hendricks county and others were established in Henry and Franklin counties in 1880 and 1882. The plan which prevailed in Ohio was the one first copied, the orphans' homes being organized by boards of private persons who appointed the matron, the counties paying a per-diem for each child.

When the state board began its work in 1889, there were orphans' homes in 42 counties, some owned privately, others built by the counties under the law of 1881, but all supported by the counties, in whole or part, on the per-diem plan. In theory each county home was intended as a training school in decent living and a way-station on the road to placing out in an adoptive home. But the per capita plan had its usual insidious results and sometimes children were held for the county money they earned, when they might have been placed out with advantage.

Placing Out

A few of these homes had very vigorous management and the children were placed out in large numbers. One joint orphans' home, in the northern part of the state, beginning by taking children from two counties, was broadened out until it served for ten. This from the first was distinctly a placing-out agency and took some of its children as far west as Dakota and even Idaho, placing very few in Indiana.

During the period from 1857 to 1898 a great many dependent children from

¹⁰The Catholic Orphan Asylum at Vincennes was opened August, 1849.

¹¹It is well known that Catholic orphanages make no discrimination as to sect, yet as a matter of fact, most of their charges come from Catholic families.

eastern states, especially from New York and Ohio, and a few from Massachusetts, were brought into the state. Many of these were placed in excellent homes, from which the dependent children of Indiana seemed debarred. There is a recognized advantage in placing a child who has undesirable relatives at some distance from his former home. Most of these imported children were successfully placed and kindly treated, and there are today in Indiana men and women of character and culture who were brought as waifs from New York. But some of the work was poorly done and carelessly supervised afterwards and there were occasional abuses. In 1899, a law prescribed the registration of all children brought into the state for placement and required a bond, approved by the Board of State Charities,¹² against their becoming dependent or neglected.

In 1897 a beneficent step was taken when the state agency for dependent children was established as a department of the Board of State Charities. An excellent system of placing and of after-supervision was installed and since that was done many of the county orphan's homes have had their population much reduced and some of them have been abandoned. Yet the total number of dependent children is not much less than it was. In fact when it is remembered that children are excluded from the poorhouses and jails; that dependents are no longer admissible to the reform schools; that the general population is increasing; and that the Boards of Children's Guardians are active, it is not surprising that there are still many dependent children to be placed out and supervised.

The law creating the county Board of Children's Guardians, was among the excellent legislation of 1889. This, which at first applied only to Center township, Marion county, was founded on the principle that the rights of a child to a decent life are no less important than his property rights and may equally be defended, even against an unworthy parent. This

law was bitterly attacked in the courts but always sustained. It was gradually extended, first to cover the entire area of one or two populous counties and later to every county of the state. As a rule the work of the guardians has been wise and moderate and the results have been beneficent.

In 1909, children were further protected by a law which places maternity hospitals, boarding houses for infants (the so-called baby-farms of unsavory memory), boarding homes for children, and infant placing agencies, under the supervision of the Board of State Charities. They are required to secure an annual, written license from the board before they may receive any children, the license being revocable at any time at the discretion of the board.

As soon as this law became operative many institutions promptly went out of business and some were closed by the board refusing a license to those whose methods and practices were unsatisfactory.

The social progress of the state in its governmental aspects is most forcibly shown in its so-called charitable institutions. The development, from the county poor asylum, which, as in other states and countries, was the germ of institutional relief, to the present complete system of state and county institutions, is an interesting and fascinating study.

Although the system of poor relief has always been that of the township and county, very early in its history the duty of the state proper to certain classes of unfortunate people was recognized. The earliest mention of provision for the insane occurred in 1827. The capital had been moved in 1824 from Corydon, near the Ohio river, to its present location, and the city of Indianapolis had been established on land granted by Congress.¹

In 1827, square No. 22 was set aside for the use of a state hospital and lunatic asylum. The state hospital was not built,

¹²Under this law bonds were filed by the Cincinnati Children's Home; the New York Catholic Home Bureau; the Chicago Industrial Home for Children; and the New York Foundling's Hospital, which are still in force.

¹Advocates of the single tax must deplore the loss of the wonderful opportunity for social development that was suffered when the site of the city was peddled out to private persons, instead of being retained as the possession of the community forever.

but a log cabin on that square was used as a "crazy house" until the first buildings of what is now the Central Hospital for the Insane were ready. It is interesting that in those early days the idea was to provide for the insane with the sick rather than with criminals.

Twenty-eight years after the state's admission to the Union, Dorothea Dix, of blessed memory, came to Indiana with her gospel of humane and scientific care for the insane. One speech by her to the General Assembly of 1844, prepared for as it was by visits of inspection of the insane in almshouses and jails, within a few miles of the capitol, was enough to rouse the law makers, and they created the State Lunatic Asylum, the name of which was changed in 1846 to the Indiana Hospital for the Insane. This change of name, which indicated a more rational and scientific conception of what institutions for the insane should be, was followed in many states, notably in New York, where some 40 years later the name asylum was changed to state hospital.

The first hospital building was completed and occupied in 1848. At first, as its name implies, intended for curable cases, many chronics were kept there. In 1865 a law was enacted which required the commissioners of the insane, to take charge of and provide for the incurables in the same manner as the curables. The insane were entitled to admission on a county quota, pro rata of the population, but there was not room to take care of them all.

In 1879 a large, new department for women was equipped and for a time eased the pressure for admission. But the numbers increased more rapidly than the provision for them, and despite the law of 1865, many of the incurables were returned to the counties to make room for new and supposedly curable cases. This plan manifestly leads to much suffering and abuse. The county asylums are ill adapted for insane people. County care of the insane is seldom efficient. There are some brilliant exceptions, the most famous being that of Wisconsin, but in most of the states county care means county neglect. The Wisconsin system is really a remarkable ex-

ample of state supervision and control of county institutions, guaranteed and made positive by partial state support. Such a plan is applicable chiefly to rural communities with sparse population.

A Reform Assembly

IN 1883 there occurred one of those not infrequent sessions of the Indiana General Assembly when the spirit of reform seems to take possession of the members. At this time a law was enacted creating three, so-called, additional hospitals for the insane, one each in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the state. A special board of construction was appointed and a medical engineer, or superintendent of construction was chosen in the person of Dr. Joseph G. Rogers, a highly skilled alienist and a man with a genius for executive and constructive work.

Under this board sites were secured near Logansport, Richmond and Evansville, and very comprehensive plans adopted. The old and standardized plans of hospital building were considered obsolete and three new and distinct types of buildings were chosen. At Logansport the plan of two-story detached blocks, at Richmond a very complete cottage plan, and at Evansville the radiate plan (first devised for an English prison) were decided on. For many years past these three hospitals have been visited and studied by people from other states who have been charged with the duty of building a hospital.

At this time the state adopted a radical change of policy as regards incurables. No patients were to be discharged from the new hospitals, either to their own care as cured, or to that of the county from whence they came, "until their physical and mental condition justifies it." This gave rise to the popular misconception that the new institutions were for incurables, and they were often spoken of as asylums for the chronic insane.

The new law applied only to the districts allotted to the new hospitals, so that for some years there existed the anomalous condition of one law applying to 49 counties of the state and another to

the remaining 43. This was corrected some years later and the state was accurately re-districted for the insane.

The appropriations made in 1883 were merely a beginning of what was needed, and the sessions of the next few years were governed by conditions of economic stringency which prevented the prompt completion of the comprehensive plan. However, in 1888 the Northern Hospital was equipped and at once filled to overflowing with patients, not only from its own district but from other parts of the state. The Eastern Hospital was opened in August, 1890, and the Southern in October, 1890.

Even with four state hospitals of large capacity the needs of the insane were not met. The population of the state was growing and it seemed that the number of insane was increasing even more rapidly. The crowding of the hospitals, with the consequent refusal to accept patients, was so serious that Marion county in 1900 erected a county asylum for incurable insane with room for 200 patients. In other counties, the chronic insane were still found in the poor asylums.

In 1905 the state established a fifth hospital for the southeastern district, which was opened August 1, 1910. This is beautifully situated on a bluff overlooking the city of Madison, and commanding magnificent views for many miles up and down the Ohio river. An account of the admirable method which was adopted for choosing the location of this hospital, was published in *THE SURVEY* for December 2, 1905. Its procedure established a precedent which might well be followed everywhere and has already been followed in locating other institutions in Indiana.

Before the first hospital for the insane was erected, two other state benevolent institutions, as they were and still are called, were founded. Early in the 40's, a wealthy resident of Indianapolis who had two deaf-mute children sent East and secured a governess for them who had learned the art of teaching the deaf. At that time deaf-mutes were hardly distinguished in common thought from idiots. The fact that these two supposed idiots were to be educated because their

father was rich roused public feeling for members of the same class who were poor.

This occurred during a period of struggle for a system of public education, a struggle which was greatly aided by the efforts and example of the Friends who had already established a system of primary and secondary schools of their own.³

For Deaf-Mutes

It was not until 1848 that the victory was won and the idea of the common school, that every child, of rich or of poor parents alike, shall have a chance, as near as possible, an equal chance, for education, became vital in the Hoosier mind.

By a law of 1844, an Asylum for the Education of Deaf and Dumb was established and opened in a rented building in October of that year. This grew rapidly into a well-equipped school. In 1907 its name was changed to the Indiana State School for the Deaf. The first buildings were within the city limits on property which grew in value, and in September, 1904, was sold and a new site a few miles north of the city was obtained, upon which is now situated one of the best equipped and managed institutions of the country.

In 1847, the Indiana Institute for the Education of the Blind was established. Like the school for the deaf this was begun in rented property, but later a beautiful site was acquired in the best residential center of the city, and the institution built thereon is of dignified and noble architecture. Unlike the school for the deaf there are many reasons for a city location for the education of the blind, chiefly that the students may enjoy the advantages of church services, concerts, lectures, etc., which would be useless to the deaf. In 1907 the name of this institution was changed to Indiana School for the Blind.

³ "In 1840, in the limits of the Friends yearly meeting, there were 7,661 children of school age, and of this number only 319, or 1 in 24, were not in school. In the same year one-seventh of the population of the state was illiterate." (See *The Quakers in the Northwest*, by Harlow Lindley.)

These institutions and most of the others which have followed were owned and supported from their inception entirely by the public. The state recognized its duty to defectives, and there was no large number of wealthy and charitable people, as was the case in older states, to build and support as charity the institutions that in the opinion of Indiana people were a matter of justice. It is interesting to see how the correctional and charitable system developed. Always a new institution was created to meet a need felt by the public consciousness. It was always a condition not a theory that confronted the people, although conditions were met by the application of theories or principles like that of public education, which the popular mind recognized as vital.

Indiana had sent more volunteers to the Civil War, in proportion to her population, than any other state. When they enlisted they were told by their fellow citizens, "If you go and fight for your country and for us, you and yours shall be a sacred charge, your declining years of disability shall be passed in comfort, and if you die your orphans shall be the wards of the state." Again this was felt to be a matter of simple justice, not by any means of charity. Soon after the war Governor Morton recommended the organization of a society to make provision for the permanent care of disabled soldiers, relying for its means of operation on popular contributions. Such a society was organized. For a time it used the Indianapolis City Hospital, but early in 1866 purchased Knightstown Springs, and on April 26 of that year opened there the Home for Disabled Soldiers. The property was taken over by the legislature of 1867 and formally opened June 15, 1867, as the Indiana soldiers' and seamen's home, for sick and disabled soldiers and seamen, their widows and orphans.

The home was divided into two departments, one for veterans and one for orphans. Ten years later the part occupied by the adults was burned and as the federal government had adopted the system of national homes, it was not thought at that time necessary to rebuild; but later, in 1895, a State Home

for Veterans of the Civil War and Their Wives or Widows was established.

This was done quite as much as a duty to the wives or widows, whose sacrifices for their country had been only a little, if any, less, than those of their husbands, as it was for the veterans themselves. It was also a concession to certain of the veterans by whom the somewhat strict discipline of the National Homes is found irksome. To such an extent is this true that previous to the building of the state home many veterans actually preferred to live in county poor asylums, rather than at the National Home.

The home at Knightstown was reorganized after a second fire, in 1887, as the Indiana Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans Home, and still exists with a large population of orphans. The term "soldiers' orphans" meant at first children who were orphaned by the war, but was extended, as in many other states, to mean children born after the war, so long as their fathers had been soldiers. Now children of Union soldiers and seamen of the Civil War, the war with Spain, the war in the Philippine Islands, or in the regular service; and grandchildren of soldiers and seamen whose parents are dead or in an insane asylum are admissible.

About 1879, the then superintendent conceived the idea that the need of a home of the kind would soon disappear, and succeeded in getting the legislature to allow a part of the institution to be used for feeble-minded children, expecting that in a very few years the entire institution could be devoted to them.

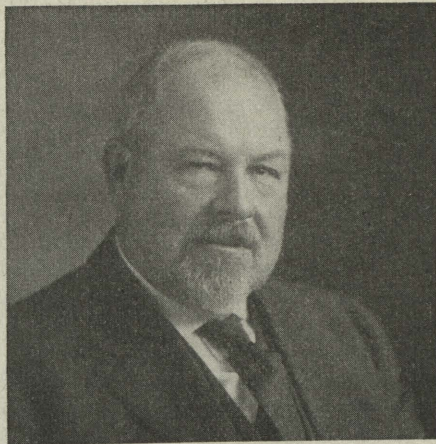
When, however, by the extension of the meaning of the term soldiers' orphan, this idea had to be given up, the legislature decided to create an institution for feeble-minded youth. The institution was to receive feeble-minded, idiotic, epileptic and paralytic children under 18, to be discharged when of age.

For the Feeble-minded

At that time the feeble-minded were generally classed with the blind and deaf as defectives who could be educated and then discharged as self-supporting, self-controlling citizens. But this assumption slowly gave way to the modern



ERNEST P. BICKNELL



ALEXANDER JOHNSON

Inasmuch as the editor, not the author, is writing the captions for these pictures, the men above may be described as the three reasons for Indiana's leadership in charitable and benevolent policies. Each of them would say there are many other reasons. Since its creation 27 years ago the Board of State Charities has known no other secretaries than these. Each has been president of the National Conference of Charities and Correction.



AMOS W. BUTLER

idea, namely, that the defect of feeble-mindedness is as permanent as blindness and deafness, but that unlike the other two classes, the feeble-minded can never be properly considered capable of self-control or self-direction, while, unfortunately, unlike most of the deaf and the blind, their defect is almost certainly inheritable so that their care, to be effective, must be permanent. As a consequence of this change of opinion, after a few years the limit of discharge was removed and that of reception was lowered from 18 to 16 years. Since that change a feeble-minded person once received is kept indefinitely.

Beginning as a separate institution at Knightstown the school was removed to temporary quarters in some unfinished buildings which were designed for the

Eastern Hospital for the Insane, near Richmond, until a special place was made for the feeble-minded at Fort Wayne. This was begun in 1887 and occupied in July, 1890; since then it has been enlarged from a capacity of 400 to one of 1,200 and a farm colony has been operated very successfully in connection with the school. A law of 1901, allowed the reception of feeble-minded women from 16 to 45 by commitment and thus created a department for adult females.

With all that has been done, the provision for the feeble-minded is still far from adequate, and at the present moment a state commission appointed by the governor is preparing to make a report which will be considered by the legislature of 1917, and it is hoped, will result in some increased provision.

Political Entanglements

POLITICS has always been an important part of the duty of an Indiana citizen. When the various state institutions began to require large numbers of employes, the politicians seized upon the opportunity that so many jobs offered them. The pernicious doctrine "to the victors belong the spoils" became thoroughly imbedded into the political methods, with the deplorable consequences that partisan domination always brings, and the spoils evil became rampant.

One contributory cause of this was the fact that until 1882, Indiana was what was called an "October state," *i.e.*, the state election was held in the month preceding the national one. As it was also a doubtful state, the parties being nearly equal in strength, every possible effort was made by the national committees of both parties to assist the state committees, with money and spell-binders, to carry the state election. The remark was often heard in the 70's, "As goes Indiana in October, so goes the nation in November."

Every six years a redistribution of representatives to the state legislature was made, the number remaining fixed at 100 in the House and 50 in the Senate. The party which had the majority at the time of redistribution always tried to gerrymander the state so as to remain in power. This was done so successfully that several times it happened that the governor and state officers were of one party and the majority of the assembly of another. This difference in party between the governor and the legislature, though often inconvenient, was not an unmixed evil; although, it sometimes accentuated partisan rancor, it did also temper it to some extent. Certain boards of trustees were appointed by the governor with the consent of the Senate, leading to boards divided politically, so accustoming the people to consider that not all the officials were necessarily of the dominant party.

For some years the charitable, penal and educational institutions of the state were the football of politics. Almost every position under them was a matter for political reward to a party worker, and, with a few brilliant exceptions, the

quality of their administration was of the low standard that such a condition must inevitably bring about. The change of date of the state election, from October to November, was made by the assembly of 1881, under the influence of a band of earnest reformers, who made that legislative year a memorable one. The change became operative in 1882.

At the subsequent elections, efforts were made to remove the incubus of partisanship. Led by Benjamin Harrison, a leading Republican, and David Starr Jordan, a leading Democrat, the reformers of both parties succeeded in taking the state university, the normal school, and Purdue University, almost if not completely, out of the political quagmire, but the benevolent and penal institutions remained submerged.

At the legislative session of 1887, charges were made by the Civil Service Reform Association which led to an investigation of the Central Hospital for the Insane, which uncovered graft, cruelty and other abuses, almost beyond belief. The condition of the public institutions, or of many of them, was probably at its lowest ebb.

This did much to lose the state and national elections of 1888 for the Democrats who were held responsible, so that it might be said that Grover Cleveland was defeated for re-election by the bad condition of a hospital for insane in Indiana—Indiana's electoral vote would have changed the national result.

The local campaign of that year was largely fought on issues of state administrative reform, although in both party platforms there were declarations of the kind. Although the state and national tickets were elected by the Republicans, the last gerrymander had been so adroit that the assembly had a Democratic majority of 22 on joint ballot. This fact with the results of the investigation mentioned above, and the declarations in the platform of each party, convinced the leaders of the majority that the time had come for a change for the better, which would redound to the honor of the party which made it. The opportunity was embraced and although some conspicuously wrong things were done by it, the legislature of 1889 has passed into history as one of the great reform sessions.

Legislature of 1889

AMONG the measures enacted in 1889, were the Australian ballot law, the law creating the Boards of Children's Guardians, and that for the Board of State Charities. A fee and salary bill was introduced and referred to a committee which brought in a successful measure in 1891. All these bills were promptly vetoed by the governor and promptly passed over his veto.

There had been a peculiarly vicious system of boards of directors for the three state benevolent institutions in Indianapolis—the Schools for Deaf and Blind, and the Central Hospital. Each had a board, consisting of two directors of its own, and a chairman who was also chairman of the other two, so constituting really a joint board of control for the three.

This chairmanship was a position greatly desired. It was always given to a faithful party henchman. It carried with it the appointment of several hundred employes, the control of monthly contracts for many thousands of dollars worth of supplies and occasional contracts for buildings and improvements. The salary was three times as much as that of each of the other members of the boards, but even then was trifling in comparison with the possibility of graft and of political power.

The advocates of a single board of control to replace the present highly successful system of an individual board for each institution under the supervision of the Board of State Charities, would do well to study what this single-headed, triple-bodied, partnership system, did to the benevolent institutions prior to 1889, and especially to read the 700 pages of testimony taken at the investigation of the Central Hospital. The conspiracy then disclosed for the looting of the hospital and the robbery of the state and the patients was fatal to the methods under which it flourished.

Before the reforms of 1889 some of the more recently created institutions had been organized with improved plans of government; the system of bi-partisan boards, with women as well as men upon them, had been introduced into the state.

In 1889 the newer system was extended to all institutions, and a real reform was begun, which was greatly aided by the Board of State Charities to whose influence much of the progress that has been made since it was appointed in 1889, has been due.

New Provisions

AMONG the new provisions was a very emphatic one, placing the responsibility for all subordinate institutional appointments solely upon the superintendent, and strictly charging that no one should be appointed for any reason other than supposed merit and only proved merit should be a reason for promotion. At first this did not apply fully to all the institutions, but by a later law it was extended to include every benevolent and correctional agency of the state. It was hard for politicians, bred under the spoils régime, to believe that this law would be observed. Yet it has been increasingly observed since its enactment, and the good condition of the institutions today is largely due to this fact.

Since 1889 changes in heads of institutions for politics have not occurred. When changes have been made there has always been some other reason, although not invariably a creditable one to the persons causing or making the change. The state has never adopted technical civil service. Its merit system is based upon public demand and approval and the precise location of responsibility on the person making the appointment. Appointees have been brought from other states, the first and most conspicuous instance of this being the first secretary of the Board of State Charities, who was a citizen of Chicago when appointed. It would be today a governor of unusual hardihood who would suggest to a board of trustees that they make a place for a friend of his by removing a worthy public servant of high or low degree.

The great reforms which began in 1889 have not been accomplished without stress and struggle. Much of the success is due to the high-minded and intelligent men who have occupied the governor's chair. But the strongest influence in upholding the work of the Board of State Charities and the reforms

which it has advocated, has been the newspaper press of the state, so ably led by the metropolitan papers of Indianapolis. The three leading newspapers of the state, Democratic, Republican and Independent (with Republican leanings) were controlled by men of conspicuous ability and public spirit. They had surrounded themselves with a group of brilliant young newspaper men, as reporters, city editors, etc.⁴ many of whom have since occupied distinguished positions in connection with the press and other affairs.

The newspaper group were the leading members of a literary club to which belonged the best of the younger business and professional men of the city and which exercised, in an entirely unofficial way, a great influence in politics both of the city and the state. Reform was in the air and these men were on the right side of nearly every public question. When they found a public servant, who, in their opinion, was able and honest, they helped him as only the press can help. But those who did not have the ring of true metal got what they deserved.

Next to the influence of the press in supporting the work of the Board of State Charities has been that of the State Conferences of Charities. The board has taken advantage of the opportunities of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, and has so well represented the state to that national body that three members of the board and all three of its secretaries have been elected to the presidency,⁵ the present secretary having been also president of the American Prison Association. Recognizing the value of the conference idea, especially in a democracy where the work of the state is the expression

of the intelligent will of the people, the board promoted the state conference. This was begun in 1890, and has had excellent fruit in harmonizing the work of public and private agencies; in raising administrative standards; in promoting reforms and in popularizing the work of the board.

Following the example of the national conference, the scope of the state conference has widened far beyond the narrow limits of technical charities and correction and now includes all forms of social effort. Recently a new departure has been made by the organizing of local or county conferences which are popular and promise well.

Incidental to and concurrent with the reforms in the benevolent and correctional affairs of the state there has been a real reform in politics as they are concerned with the institutions. While it would be utopian to claim absolute purity, yet it is no longer true, if it ever were, that "purity in politics is an iridescent dream." The leaders have taken to heart the lessons of 1888 and 1889. They have come to the conclusion that political interference with the state's charities is bad politics; that gains from patronage are so small, since for every party worker rewarded with a job several applicants are turned down and its evils and dangers so great that the rule of "let the institutions alone" prevails.

The Charities Board

As the social consciousness has developed the range of state activity has widened. Since the Board of State Charities was created, besides the institutions and amendments which have been described above, most of which, occurring since 1889, have been largely the effect of the board's work and influence, several new departments of state activity have arisen. These include a Hospital for the Treatment of Incipient Pulmonary Tuberculosis; a Village for Epileptics, which has already become famous and is being copied in other states; an extension of the colony plan to the hospitals for the insane; and last but not least, a state General Hospital in Indianapolis, made possible by the gift of Dr. and Mrs. Long and conducted for

⁴At the risk of seeming invidious I cannot refrain from mentioning with grateful appreciation in this connection the names of Bicknell, Brown, Fortune, Fuller, Hornaday, Lane and Nicholson. No faithful public servant, who served during the stressful decade from 1888 to 1898, will decry this tribute.

⁵In the matter of the National Conference, Indiana might be called the "mother of presidents," six of them in 26 years, having been from that state.

the state by the Medical School of Indiana University. Besides these there have been a host of minor reforms and improvements.

During the 27 years of the board's existence, its influence on the county institutions has been no less salutary. Allusion has been made to the poor asylums and orphanages. Many of the jails have been greatly bettered, and the hope is strong that these, formerly, "schools of vice and recruiting stations for the army of professional criminals," will soon serve a better purpose.

Besides all its effective work in public affairs, the private charities of the state have not been neglected by the board. From the beginning of its existence, it has regarded the injunction of its organic law and has studied the whole field of charities of the state. None of its secretaries has ever been heedless of an opportunity of helpfulness to the Associated Charities or other useful volunteer agencies.

The work of the State Board has been the subject of commendation by every governor who has passed upon its reports. Governor Hanley's story of the reform of outdoor relief has been quoted. Governor Marshall said, in effect, that every time the board's advice has been heeded by the legislature, the results have been excellent, and that nothing that has been done on its suggestion has been repealed or seriously amended. Other governors have expressed themselves similarly. Its history from the beginning has been a story of faithful, enlightened and successful activity.

When the first report of the board was in preparation, a program of needed reforms was incorporated in it, some explicitly and some by inference. One of its leading members, in commenting upon the proposed report, said: "Friends, if all we here suggest is accomplished in 30 or 40 years, we shall be wonderfully successful." Before twenty-five years had passed everything was accomplished and the board had to create a new program of advance.

When the eighteenth National Conference met in Indianapolis in 1891, its president was Oscar Carlton McCulloch, the author of the bills that made the

Board of State Charities and the Board of Children's Guardians. He was one of the first members of the Board of State Charities. His influence greatly helped to shape its policies, and to promote its methods of reasonableness; of constructive activity; of the securing of improvements in the institutions from within, not attempting to force reforms upon them from without; of faith in the people and belief that when they know what should be done they will want to do it; of faith in the press that it greatly desires to lead the people aright.

These have been the beliefs upon which the wonderfully successful work of this useful board has been founded. It has stood for the right with absolute fairness and freedom from selfish aims, and the people have believed in it, the public men have trusted it. In speaking of the possibilities of the board's work among the people of Indiana, Mr. McCulloch said to the author of this sketch: "They are a wholesome, honest, kindly, intelligent folk; they are frank and hospitable both to new men and new ideas." He knew them and he loved them and was beloved. He died before the nineteenth conference met, but his influence is a living force today. Rarely has one man achieved so much. His greatest achievements live after him, indeed they have culminated since he has passed away. He has "joined the choir invisible whose music is the gladness of the world," but the effect of his words and work flows on in a constantly widening and deepening stream.

Indiana has still much to do. It were idle to claim perfection. The work of the counties is wonderfully better than it was in 1889, but there is still much improvement to make, much base political influence to quench. The jails are being depleted of their inmates by the state penal farm, soon they will be merely places for the detention of accused persons not for the punishment of convicted ones.

And there are betterments still to make in state affairs, better dealing with the incipient insane, psychopathic wards in every city and large town, which shall lift the reproach of putting the sick-mind into jail, even for a night; better

work at some of the hospitals, an improvement of medical care, and an extension of the system of occupation for its curative as well as economic value; double or treble the present accommodation for the feeble-minded. One hapless class of defectives, the cripples, is still neglected, and there are other things to be done. But what has been done causes

us to be hopeful, to thank God and take courage.

If the gains of the next one hundred years shall be as much greater in proportion to the time, as the gains of the past thirty years have surpassed those of the previous seventy, the millennium in state affairs will surely be due to arrive shortly thereafter.